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MAY 29, 1947

Town Meeting



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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR



How Can We Strengthen the American Family?

Moderator, GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.

Speakers

LUIGI G. LIGUTTI

CHARLES P. TAFT

ANNIE LAURIE PETERS

THOMAS E. GADDIS

(See also page 13)

COMING

— June 5, 1947 —

Are Communism and Christianity Incompatible?

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THE BROADCAST OF JUNE 5:

"Are Communism and Christianity Incompatible?"

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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



MAY 29, 1947

VOL. 13, No. 5

How Can We Strengthen the American Family?

Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. This is our third program this season about the American family.

You may remember that on March 20 last we announced a nation-wide contest on the subject, "How can we strengthen the American family?" which was to be our topic for the twelfth anniversary broadcast. Well, here it is.

You've been reading headlines like these in our magazines and newspapers for the past three years: "Reno Divorces in 1946 Set All-Time Record," "The Family in Western Civilization is Seriously Threatened and Needs Material and Moral Help," "Early Marriage Advocated as Cure-All for Immorality."

This problem has been with us through the ages, but never so severely and dramatically as in the Machine Age. The same gigantic machine that is shaking our economic and political systems is tear-

ing at the very roots of our family life.

The one-time family unit, like the individual, feels itself small and helpless in a great big world whose forces it cannot control. The family has been called the first bulwark of American life. What can we do to strengthen it? In addition to our two grand-prize winners, about whom we'll tell you in a moment, we've invited the Honorable Charles P. Taft and the Right Reverend Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti as our two experts to give us their opinions.

So let's hear first from the man who is the father of seven children and five and one-half grandchildren, and who has spent most of his life dealing with social problems in his native city of Cincinnati. He was National Chairman of the Community Mobilization for Human Needs, and for a time, an official of our State Department. As the son of the twenty-seventh president of the United States, he

is a credit to his distinguished father and to the Nation. Although he earns his living as a lawyer, he's the first layman to hold the office of President of the Federal Council of Churches. In his spare time, goodness knows where he found it, he has written a book called, "Why I Am For the Church," which is to be published next month. I give you the Honorable Charles P. Taft. Mr. Taft. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Taft:

Every so often I pass on the streets downtown some youthful woman with a crying three-year-old on the end of her arm; or I share a DC-4, that is much too small, with an impossible brat and a devoted lady that gives him everything he wants, including the aisle.

I hear an irritated, "Bobby, now you stop." And Bobby doesn't. There is a "Wham." Bobby wails louder than ever. I shudder.

Maybe I just don't meet the quiet good ones, except, of course, my own flesh and blood, who are wonderful—usually.

I was much interested a few years back to read a piece by a couple of young Englishmen who tried to analyze what causes wars by observing why children fight. They fight over the possession of toys. That I have seen, and the urge to grab can certainly be recorded by this parent and grand-

parent as a common characteristic of our young hopefuls.

They fight strangers—the outsider. Nobody can be crueler than the outsider than children. What community practices make Negroes or Spanish Americans, or any minority group, outsiders, half the battle against prejudice and intolerance is lost. But more common and more lasting than anything probably, so these young Englishmen wrote, is the way a kid who is slapped down by Papa takes it out on the cat or the front door or pint-sized Johnny from next door, just because Pop is too busy to hit back at.

Without following these authors all the way to international relations, where they went, I judge that they certainly have something so far as family life is concerned. Accumulated frustrations and the resulting irritations—that you keep to yourself—with the others in the house certainly do things to the home. Divorce and broken homes are at a record rate today because we haven't taught people how to live easily with each other, or how to adjust themselves to the changes all around us, and it happens to every one of us.

Family troubles and labor troubles are part of the same picture. Elton Mayo's industrial research led him to the conclusion that the extraordinary expansion of the area of human knowledge about *things* has not been matched

any equal acquisition of knowledge about working with *people*.

The old theory was that people did what was called for by a logical self-interest — something that an economic scientist could figure out and predict. Well, I suppose most of us are more or less selfish, all right, but it is neither an intelligent nor a very longsighted selfishness. Most of what we do is the not-too-conscious result of all of our current failures and successes in our daily relations with people—at home, and in the neighborhood, and where we work. It is not logical and it is not predictable.

Now this hit-or-miss process is certainly not good enough. Each of us has to deal these days with constant changes. None of us gets used to changes easily. They upset us. The youthful mamma with the yelling brat never had to bother when she was in high school.

At least it looks easy, as she thinks 'back. But now when she can't leave Bobby anywhere, and he won't stay in a baby buggy, and gosh, *it's hot!* and what in the world is he crying about now, and why did I ever have a baby anyway, and why doesn't husband Dick screw the cap back on the tooth paste, and why isn't he more help without I have to ask him every time!

You see, nobody has taught most of us how to get used to new

things or how to understand dopes like hubby. We don't stop thinking about ourselves long enough to listen for what's going on in other people's minds. That listening is the first step in human relations and in unselfishness.

Religion tells us to obey God's word in our conscience, but the true genius of religion is to learn how to listen with humility for God's word and purpose in what others who seek him say or do.

Co-operation and teamwork depend on listening to what someone doesn't or can't say, perhaps, because he doesn't know how. It helps you to work better together when you feel or guess what your partner needs and wants.

If the oil companies can teach filling station employees how to deal with people, if the airlines can do it for hostesses, then surely Christians can train husbands and wives and parents and children. We just haven't tried hard enough.

Now many devoted pastors are working on it. Many people from the new Inter-Denominational Conference on Family Life, and the Federal Council of Churches, all the way to individual writers and educators and local groups, are trying to help. It still is not enough.

The pastor can preach on family life. He can develop real and complete skill in counseling youngsters who are about to be married. He seeks to serve the often unex-

pressed and perhaps unexpressible needs of the souls for whom he works, but he is one man with only 24 hours a day and perhaps a family of his own to cultivate. He must learn to multiply himself by stimulating and training his laymen, in enlisting young "marrieds" in homemaking classes at the church, and in many other kinds of activities.

All of these are exercises for laymen in how to build teamwork. This teamwork and co-operation are not ends, but tools. The goals that make the effort and the wear and tear worth while are no less than the achievement of God's purpose for each member of the family. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Mr. Taft. And now we welcome to Town Hall a noted and beloved resident of Des Moines, Iowa, the Right Reverend Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti. He is the Executive Secretary of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. He has published many articles in this field and is co-author of a book called *Rural Roads to Security*. Monsignor Ligutti. (*Applause.*)

Monsignor Ligutti:

I must admit that I have never been whammed by my mother except as I needed it. Neither have I the family record of Mr. Taft—children or grandchildren—but as a country pastor I have seen the

American family at its best and times, at its worst.

The American family needs strengthening. Can it be strengthened if it does not possess a firm foundation? My answer is *no*. The Empire State Building cannot stand on a raft in the East River. A foundation is needed for a strong building, anywhere—anytime.

Let me point out, first of all, the things that appear little but are important just the same. Serious preparation is needed on the part of the future husband and wife in physical, intellectual, moral, social and spiritual preparation.

The wedding day is a date with destiny. The salvation of your soul and the happiness of future generations hang in the balance. It is not just two of you. It is society. It is the Church and state. It is the whole world itself. Keeping impure company is the sure road to an unhappy marriage.

For any couple about to be married, I would advise a day of silent recollection on the eve of the wedding. What have we instead? Many a groom would feel better if he had an icebag on his head as he marched up the aisle.

I question very much the results achieved by our tradition of shopping around for a husband or wife. Most of the time, both boy and girl end up under a rummage counter.

In preparation for family life, what about cooking? I'd hate

try biscuits made by Rosie, the Riveter. And you girls who are career-minded, don't forget that you can't fry eggs on a typewriter. Homemaking is a full-time job. Is there a husband who wants to divorce a good mother and an excellent cook?

In every home there ought to be special cooking for feast days. Listen to this ad, "Why spoil Christmas with cooking and washing dishes? Come to the Greasy Spoon Cafe. Enjoy a grand dinner and a movie afterwards." No wonder the family spirit goes to pot, even on Christmas Day.

We are born in a hospital, wedding breakfast in a hotel, when we are dead they cart us to the undertaking parlors, and union pall-bearers—not good neighbors—gently drop us into a grave. (*Laughter.*)

In a family, love and the spirit of sacrifice must reign supreme. Selfishness causes dishonesty, and dishonesty begets infidelity. How wonderful it is to be loyal and true to the end!

How many lovely families have been made unhappy by drink? How many broken homes, as the result of drink? Think it over. What do you prefer, drink or the family? Take your choice. You can't have both.

The material side of a household is also very important. Some years ago, I watched a young engaged couple build their own

home—a nest in the springtime. I don't believe in rented houses. There is a relationship between lack of ownership and divorce. Ownership will strengthen the family and the Nation. We produced war materials, but are helpless in producing homes. That's a national disgrace.

The family must have space, light, air. Privacy is necessary. A little girl said to me that she liked living in the country because her family can have a fight and nobody hears it. (*Laughter.*)

There is a relationship between the divorce rate and ownership of a family cow or gardening by the family. What is your home like? The home of today too often is but a filling station. You come in, blow the horn, fill up, and blow out. (*Laughter.*)

Let me come now to the very foundation of the family. The marriage contract entered into by a man and woman must form an unbreakable union, lasting until death. It must be based upon real love—loyal and true to the end. It is not a lark. It is not a gamble. It is a solemn contract, affecting not only the individual lives of two persons, but society itself. The main purposes of marriage are the procreation and education of offspring, mutual help, and the fuller development of personality. Permanency and motivation are essential. Marriage and the family are sacred.

We Catholics believe that marriage is one of the seven sacraments. We believe that God blesses the love of two human beings in a very special way so as to enable them and their offspring to fulfill their duties. We object to mock marriages. If Baptism and the Eucharist are not to be mocked, why mock the Sacrament of Marriage? A stable contract in a holy union should produce a strong family.

The family must be a kingdom, with a king, queen, and subjects. Yet it is a democracy where there exist perfect equality and at the same time degrees of authority.

The family is a nursery, where children are born and are appreciated as a gift of God.

The family is a school, the highest and the best in the world, because it is a school nature itself has established, whose curriculum is never changed. A mother's kiss and a father's reproachful look are the textbooks that Adam and Eve used.

The family is an economic co-operative, with a board of directors, and decisions are arrived at in a democratic fashion for the good of the family.

The family is a sanctuary where God is worshiped in the family circle, where religious loyalties are developed, where mutual love leads to heaven itself.

There are no magical remedies that will strengthen the American

family, no laws and no book leading. Baby-sitters are not a solution for your family problems. Run away and commit suicide is not the way out. Only plain, natural, Christian living will strengthen the American family. (Applause.)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Monsignor Ligutti. And now we come to our two grand-prize winners—selected from several thousand contestants who submitted letters on tonight's question, and these two won \$500 cash and all-expense trips to New York from their home towns.

First, we'll hear from Mr. Thomas E. Gaddis of Los Angeles, California. Through his work as Deputy Probation Officer of Los Angeles County, which is the largest and one of the most efficient probation departments in the world, Mr. Gaddis has been in a position to see many broken homes. He is 38 years old, married, and is the father of a daughter. He's a graduate of the University of Minnesota where he specialized in medical and psychological subjects, and taught at the University of Iowa before he moved to Los Angeles. I take pleasure in presenting Mr. Thomas E. Gaddis. Mr. Gaddis. (Applause.)

Mr. Gaddis:

Monsignor Ligutti, I noticed you referred to union pallbearers in your script. I think we'll have

that we would both trust union pallbearers — underfed pallbearers might let go and drop us.

I think there are many things we can do to strengthen the American family today, especially if we understand the problems and what causes them. Consider this—Why does every third marriage today end in divorce? Why is it that of every 100 marriages, 44 are childless, and 22 result in a single child?

We should realize that no Western civilization has ever survived the collapse of its family system. The Roman emperors saw their smash-up coming. They tried to rescue the threatened Roman family, and they failed. But we can profit from the example set by the Romans.

There are many things that the family can do and many things that society can do to strengthen the American home. Mrs. Peters is going to deal principally with the family itself, but I want to emphasize those things which society can do.

If we are to strengthen the American home, we must first have homes to strengthen. This means that we must begin immediately to make homes available to the millions of citizens today who still wish to establish homes. We have placed hurdles before homemakers, which many of them cannot jump. Young people must be able to marry and set up a home in the sporting assurance that this home

will not be physically broken by evictions, real estate manipulations, and economic abnormalities. These plagues have been forced upon the families of America by scarcity housing.

Now this does not mean a Utopian notion that every family can own a house and the land under it. It does mean that our country is big enough, bright enough, and entirely rich enough to provide spacious living quarters within the means of the average family. Do you realize that in America today the average city home is smaller than that of a European peasant? And it is less lived in than any home in the world.

Mr. Taft, what's the use of talking about the emotional and spiritual problems of the family if our economic system makes it impossible for them to have a roof of their own?

Authorities have outlined the gradual decline of our homes from centers of work, culture, and education to hollow shells in which we sleep, occasionally eat, and frequently die. We must sweeten the American home and give it an around-the-clock stability, instead of leaving it an over-night hotel.

And we can move solidly along this path by doing the following things: Give economic protection to the American family through a system of loans, bonuses, and substantial tax reductions. Publicize great Americans, socialites and

other prestige people who have distinguished themselves with large families—like Mr. Taft, for example.

And why can't we get a self-imposed discipline from the American press to play down Hollywood divorces and bizarre grounds for divorce, and sensational material about family break-ups? If eminent homes are broken, let them break in silence, not to the tune of journalistic brass bands. Newspapers demonstrated the strength of self-censorship during the war in matters of national security. They can do the same in the equally grave problem of our national home security.

And why can't we have uniform divorce laws throughout the United States? We could, if you and I demanded them. We could make application for divorce and then require a conciliation report and a marriage analysis from a trained counselor in marriage relations. Such a report would be read by the judge and by the divorcing couple before the divorce is granted. And, by the way, why not make the one-year interlocutory decree a uniform, national practice?

Then, also, we should make family problems, marriage counseling, sex education, and home-making more active parts of our entire educational system. We should encourage formation of mental hygiene clinics throughout the United States.

Finally, we should subsidize National Public Relations Campaign with American industry and American labor co-operating to establish in the national mind the benefits and values of the family and the home.

In a democracy, all powers of government and self-preservation are vested, ultimately, in the people. From the people of our country must come the power to re-integrate and strengthen the American home.

Billions of dollars were spent for national defense in war. The American home is our first line of defense in peace. We can and must afford, through our elected representatives, to set up a program that will triumph over present threats to our American home. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Mr. Gaddis. And now let's hear from our other grand-prize winner—the woman in the case — Mrs. Annie Laurie Peters, of Alexandria, Louisiana. Mrs. Peters is a grandmother, and a veteran of fifty-one years in the teaching profession. She's six-five years young. She romps, plays, and swims with people a third her age, and is the proud possessor of a Master of Arts degree which she earned at the age of six. Mrs. Annie Laurie Peters, welcome to Town Hall. (*Applause.*)

Mrs. Peters:

Since I am the only woman who can reach the microphone, I must rise to the defense of Rosie, the Riveter, whom Monsignor reprimanded. If our economic conditions, today, make Rosie make rivets, why shouldn't Mr. Rosie learn to make biscuits? (*Applause and laughter.*)

And when those thousands of prospective bridegrooms apply to Monsignor for the names of the women who can cook, perhaps he can give them a questionnaire that will list their qualifications as well.

My daughter-in-law in Alexandria tells me that my otherwise-perfect son hangs damp towels on the backs of chairs. Is that strengthening the American family, or the upholstery, either, for that matter? (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Taft admits that Dick does not put the toothpaste cap on.

I agree with Mr. Gaddis that the real American home is in our first line of defense. And in this letter to my daughter, I want to show you that strength must come from within the family as well as from without.

"Joy, my little daughter, in the years since you have married John, you've asked me many questions—from how to make your gravy brown, to how to vote. Your latest, however, is a \$64 question: How can we Strengthen the American Family?"

"As a slogan, I should say, make all your *my's* *our's*. Human beings

are the products of heredity and environment. If you're looking for immediate reinforcement for your family, you'd better skip heredity and concentrate on environment, for you've already inherited Dad's red hair and my fiery temper. And I felt on my last visit to you that your little Nancy had got her share of both from you.

"When you married, you and John established a unit of government of which you were the self-constituted rulers. Your daughter and son, Nancy and Jack, became members, by reason of birth; and since Americans can only thrive in a democracy, your home must be one.

"Children in such a home say, 'our car,' 'our home,' 'our family,' and unconsciously that unit expands to include 'our school,' 'our town,' and later still, 'our state' and 'our nation.'

"Possession entails responsibility, and joint possession develops fair-sharing, not only of luxuries, but of work, and of privations. Money may be the root of evil, but its intelligent sharing is the basis of peaceful family living. Nancy and Jack are small now to understand budget restrictions, but if they buy their ice cream with 'our money' instead of 'Dad's money,' you will have poured some solid cement in the foundation of building a strong family.

"Understanding of all situations is necessary. If John's salary is

cut, tell the entire family about it, and explain how it may alter their scheme of living. The acceptance of responsibility develops the receiver. Lack of funds can be replaced or supplemented always by more generous giving by parents of their time—their talents.

"I recall a formerly wealthy family from Chicago who moved to Louisiana on a WPA job. The mother and father instituted the popcorn hour—a huge bowl of popcorn and a game of dominoes, plus a couple of jolly parents, held two growing boys and their friends at home with more efficiency than a recreational center with a trained director." (This is no reflection on Mr. Gaddis.)

"Several years later, in more prosperous times, one of the sons announced the birth of his son, thusly: 'The John Smiths announce the arrival of a new domino player. He isn't eating popcorn yet, but he will.'

"Laughter is an excellent help to fair-sharing. My mother used to say that laughter was like axle grease—to smooth the squeaks away. Make comedies out of minor tragedies, and let the youngsters feel that no matter how wrong they've been, with a strong, loving family pulling for them, things are bound to come out right. A feeling of security adds to strength.

"The press, the pulpit, the radio warn, 'Juvenile delinquency is increasing.' But with family democracy, the family unit would be

vitaminized gradually but permanently, and delinquency would decrease. There are some who would not change, but were there not some little children in starving Europe too far gone to respond to nutritional measures? This is how many did respond.

"Scattered over the face of the United States are thousands of young families—some packed in trailers, some in rows of quonset huts, some in tiny homes financed by GI loans, some wedged into rooms of other people's homes. All, Joy, like you and John, fighting high prices. If all of these thousands of parents would look into the clear eyes of their youngsters — for most of these homes do have children, no matter how crowded they are—and say to them, 'Fellows, you're our equals for you are made of us, and we are going to share our home with you as a democracy.'

"I have not emphasized religion as a prime requisite. It is necessary. Religion must be the

'God's in His Heaven.'

'All's right with the world.'

"Shall I say amen, or merely I love you. Goodbye." (A pause.)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Mrs. Peters. Well, it's no wonder that Mr. J. H. Davis, Governor of Louisiana, sent the following telegram to me this afternoon, and here's what says:

"Louisiana is indeed proud of her national champion, Mrs. Annie L. Peters of Bolton High School, Alexandria, and we eagerly await your program this evening. Congratulations to Town Hall and Mrs. Peters." (Applause.)

And now it's about time to let the members of this representative Town Hall audience in on this discussion, and I know they have a great many interesting questions for you, so while we get ready for our question period, I'm sure that you, our listeners, will be interested in the following message.

But first, let's pause for station identification.

Announcer: You are listening to America's Town Meeting of the Air, brought to you by Town Hall and the American Broadcasting Company, originating tonight in Town Hall, New York, and conducted by George V. Denny, Jr., president of Town Hall.

You have heard the Honorable Charles P. Taft, the Right Reverend Monsignor Luigi Ligutti, Mrs. Annie Laurie Peters and Mr. Thomas E. Gaddis, discussing the question, "How Can We

THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

THOMAS E. GADDIS — Mr. Gaddis is deputy probation officer in Los Angeles County. He resides at 1074 Queen Anne Place, Los Angeles, California.

ANNIE LAURIE PETERS — Mrs. Peters is a teacher at Bolton High School, Alexandria, Louisiana, and she has been in the teaching profession for 51 years. Her home address is 2508 Vance Avenue, Alexandria.

CHARLES PHELPS TAFT — The son of William Howard Taft, the 27th president of the United States, and the brother of Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio, Charles Phelps Taft was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1897. He has the degrees of B.A. and LL.B. from Yale, and LL.D. from the University of Toledo, University of Rochester, Marietta College, Miami University, and Ohio Wesleyan University.

Mr. Taft was admitted to the bar in 1922 and started the practice of law with Robert Taft. From 1924-37, he was a member of the firm of Taft, Stettinius & Hollister. From 1927-28 he was prosecuting attorney for Hamilton County, Ohio. He is a member of the Cincinnati Bar, the Ohio State Bar, and the American Bar Associations.

Charles Taft served as director of the U. S. Community War Services division of the Federal Security Agency from 1941 to 1943, and was director of the

Wartime Economics Affairs for the Department of State during 1944. He is currently serving as president of the Federal Council of Churches.

Mr. Taft is the author of *City Management—The Cincinnati Experiment*. He also wrote *You and I*—and *Roosevelt*.

LUIGI G. LIGUTTI — Right Reverend Monsignor Ligutti is executive secretary of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Mngr. Ligutti was born in Italy in the Province of Udine, in 1895. Here he received his elementary and high school training. He migrated to the United States in 1912, continued his education at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, where he received a S.T.B. degree, and was ordained to the priesthood in Des Moines in 1917. As pastor at Granger, Iowa, he organized and conducted religious vacation schools for the benefit of children living in mining camps, and also sponsored and organized Granger Homesteads. Mngr. Ligutti has recently visited continental Europe and the Scandinavian countries to make surveys of co-operatives.

Mngr. Ligutti is the author of *Rural Roads to Security* and numerous articles for periodicals, and is the recipient of an M.A. degree from Catholic University and an honorary LL.D. degree from St. Ambrose College. In 1938, he was appointed Domestic Prelate by His Holiness Pope Pius XI.

Strengthen the American Family?"

For your convenience, we print each week the Town Meeting Bulletin containing a complete record of tonight's discussion, including the questions and answers to follow.

You may secure tonight's Town Meeting Bulletin by writing to Town Hall, New York 18, New York, and enclosing 10 cents to cover the cost of printing and mailing. Allow at least two weeks for delivery.

During the summer months your

Town Meeting will be with you each Thursday, as usual, but for four weeks in June, while your moderator, Mr. Denny, is on vacation, three guest moderators will guide the Town Meeting into informative and challenging discussion.

Next week, when America's Town Meeting of the Air begins its summer tour in Des Moines on its way to the West and Far West, Mr. Clifton Utley, news commentator and expert on foreign affairs, will be our guest moderator.

QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Mr. Denny: And now we are ready to hear the questions from this representative Town Hall audience, one of whom may win a \$210 set of the *Encyclopedia Americana*. Our local committee of judges is standing by listening for the question which the committee considers best for bringing out new facts and increasing our understanding of this interesting subject. If you'll ask your question, provided it is limited to 25 words, you may receive a thirty volume set of the *Encyclopedia Americana*. We'll start with the lady right over there, eighth row. Yes?

Lady: My question is addressed to Mr. Taft. Would not the teaching of individual responsibilities to our children, early in life, help to strengthen the family and ultimately the community?

Mr. Taft: Well, I think that certainly goes without saying. That's what every good parent starts out to do as early as the children can possibly arrange it. Sometimes they won't let them take a trip across town when they're probably old enough to do it. I think you can stretch the age a little bit on that kind of thing.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman on the front row.

Man: I ask this question of Monsignor Ligutti. Marriage of people of different faiths is quite

prevalent today. Would you say that this is a weakening move?

Monsignor Ligutti: Yes. There are enough troubles in married life without having religious troubles.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Mr. Taft wants to add a comment on that. Mr. Taft?

Mr. Taft: I think my answer would be almost the same as Monsignor Ligutti's. If you have a really basic difference in religious faith, it can cause an awful lot of trouble. I wouldn't want to keep two apart that really belong together, but they'd better go over that pretty carefully before they get married.

Mr. Denny: I just wanted to have both religious leaders represented there. Yes?

Man: A question for Mr. Gaddis. How do you explain more divorces in a boom than in a bust period? More among the rich than among the poor?

Mr. Denny: Mr. Gaddis.

Mr. Gaddis: Sir, I think that both the rich and the poor, at certain periods of history, feel very insecure. I think that a person who is rich can feel just as insecure as a person who is poor, and certainly in a society as insecure as we have today, there is insecurity all around.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The young lady.

Lady: I address my query to Mrs. Peters. Isn't it true that support of the church and knowledge of one's religion would unite the family under bonds of common interest and understanding?

Mrs. Peters: It certainly would. It is a part of their life. If I should write you a cake recipe and leave out the flour, you wouldn't think for a minute that I meant to leave out flour. You would, on the contrary, say "How much flour?" It's like that with religion. It's bound to be there.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Man on the front row, please.

Man: My question is directed to Mr. Taft. I'm a bit confused. Mr. Gaddis placed emphasis upon homes and space for the family. Mrs. Peters emphasized intellectual preparation for parenthood. As a father of a large family, I'd like to hear your opinion.

Mr. Taft: Well, I think all of them have something to do with it. The field in which we have failed the most, however, is in attempting to learn and to teach human relations. The economic problem we've discussed. We have authorities that give us opinions. We may not get an answer. But in the other field, there has been relatively little teaching, relatively little research, and certainly relatively little success in getting people to understand how to deal with one another.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The lady.

Lady: Mrs. Peters. War costs \$55,000, reducing one life. We not an infant subsidy, preserving natural motherhood, economic peace, increasing purchasing power, distribution, employment, better health and homes?

Mr. Denny: That's a lot in the Mrs. Peters. Did you get it all?

Mrs. Peters: No, I didn't.

Mr. Denny: Well, she says that it cost \$55,000 to kill a person our enemies—in the war. And it cost that much to kill a person why shouldn't we subsidize families in America to do things that she suggests—a number of which she mentioned?

Mrs. Peters: I think that could settle for \$5,000, instead of \$55,000—\$5,000 in education, peace and right home-living would be worth \$55,000 for the dead. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: All right. Thank you.

Man: I would like to direct a question to Monsignor Ligutti. Do you believe that increased loyalty to the family union will be accomplished at the sacrifice of loyalty to the community and the state?

Monsignor Ligutti: No. Loyalty to the family is the first. Loyalty to the family means an increased loyalty to the state and to the community. The community is made up of families. The state is made up of families. That is the cell of society. A better family makes up a better body, and

group of cells, healthy and sound, in society will make up a better state and a better community. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman on the fifth row here.

Man: Mr. Denny, my question is directed to Mr. Taft. Mr. Taft, don't you think that the most important thing today is that we have world disarmament, outlaw the atomic bomb, so that there will be families left in this world to educate? (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Denny: I knew somebody would bring the atomic bomb or the whole economic system into this picture. All right, Mr. Taft.

Mr. Taft: My answer would be very brief. I am very much interested in having something done about the atomic bomb, and certainly about maintaining the general level of employment in every country, including especially the United States; but I think what we're talking about here is maintaining family life and the specific measures that can be undertaken in order to accomplish that.

I think you should therefore point your finger directly at the kinds of things which need to be done, which is the education of individual people in individual communities right at the grass roots. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Very briefly, sir. All right. Turn the microphone around here and let this gentleman talk.

Man: How are we going to have

any families left in this world if we're going to continue to kill each other? That's what—

Mr. Denny: I get your question all right. We all understand that, but that's another problem we'll discuss on Town Meeting later. But tonight we're discussing how the family can take care of itself if the atomic bomb doesn't come.

Man: My question is addressed to Mr. Gaddis. In your opinion, are the Sunday schools of the Nation playing an aggressive enough part in the family life of the Nation?

Mr. Gaddis: I don't have much experience with Sunday schools because I deal more with adults. However, I think that perhaps the subject matter of the Sunday schools of the Nation could be changed to include a little bit more of a study of the economic way in which our country is constructed. I think that that should be added to the curriculum. I know that is a rather strange statement, but I believe it.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. I think both Mr. Taft and Monsignor Ligutti would like to comment on that. Monsignor Ligutti?

Monsignor Ligutti: The first and the most important school is the home—the father and mother, the only teachers, the real professors. You'll never find a professor or a teacher in the Sunday school that will equal the efficiency and the effectiveness of a father and a mother. There is a sanc-

tuary. There is a religious instruction school. Sunday school—the Catholic schools — any other kind of a school is only a secondary agency compared to the great agency, the home.

Mr. Denny: Mr. Taft.

Mr. Taft: I would agree entirely, Monsignor Ligutti. If you would figure that the time involved is about one hour of Sunday school compared to 50-odd hours that the parents have a direct influence on the children, so far as the time is concerned, you would know you couldn't possibly do it in Sunday school.

My own feeling is, however, that in our educational system, as Walter Lippmann pointed out a number of years ago at the Association for the Advancement of Science, we have left out one of the very basic elements — the Jewish-Christian foundation of our civilization. It seems to me that we should make religion — without bringing in any sectarian teaching—we should make religion certainly one of the curriculum activities, rather than an extra-curriculum activity. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Yes, the lady in the balcony.

Lady: Mrs. Peters, don't you think the movies and periodicals put too much stress on the fun of young love and too little on the satisfactions of maturity?

Mr. Denny: Oh, boy! That's

another \$64 question for you, Mrs. Peters.

Mrs. Peters: Do you think that you could rear children without a great deal of love and a great deal of understanding? That's what I mean—for them to run to you when they get in trouble, rather than run away from you. Forgive them much, and love them greatly. They'll get along, economic question or not.

Mr. Denny: Wait a minute. Wait. You haven't answered the question.

Mrs. Peters: What question? (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Denny: I'm not even going to let a prize winner get away with that! What she said was, don't the movies and, what did you say, the press — the periodicals put too much stress on the fun of young love and not enough on the joys and satisfactions of married life and families?

Mrs. Peters: I beg your pardon. We were talking about different kinds of love. (*Laughter.*) Perhaps so. But if in the family you teach them to discriminate—children use their own homes as a standard, and the press and the movies will be powerless if you supply the standards. (*Applause.*)

Man: This question is addressed to Monsignor Ligutti and to Mrs. Peters, if I may. And the question is whether or not—

Mr. Denny: All right. Fire away barrels. Go ahead.

Man: The question is whether or not there can't be some co-ordinating office whereby the school, as well as religious educational institutions, can combine to educate parenthood in order to eliminate prejudice and bias in the home itself.

Mr. Denny: All right. How about starting with the parents? Monsignor Ligutti. I see he comes up slowly.

Monsignor Ligutti: If you start with the parents, then start with Mrs. Peters. (*Laughter.*) I think that the first and the most important place where we learn tolerance, kindness toward the neighbor, is the home. Where you find ignorance and prejudice, where you find a lot of things said in the home or jokes told that are prejudicial to the interest and to the welfare of the community, et cetera, you'll find the same thing cropping out among the children in the schools. There is no question at all that the Church, the school, but in a very special way, the home, can train the children to tolerance as they should be trained.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Now Mrs. Peters, would you comment on that?

Mrs. Peters: Yes. I agree perfectly with Monsignor Ligutti, but I think that schools—there is a shortage of school teachers now already and if we're going to have to educate the parents, why that'll

be too much. So, I really believe—I'm going to stick to it—it's the job of the family to establish the measuring standards of society, and anyone—those who are married and those who are just contemplating it, as I would think that questioner was doing.

Mr. Denny: Now, just a minute. I'm going to appeal on the grounds of the gentleman's question. He is worried—Oh, you know him? What is he? A student of yours?

Mrs. Peters: No. He's no student but he's in love with a student of mine. (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Denny: Oh, really? I see. (*Laughter.*) I hope the radio audience heard what you said. What Mrs. Peters said was, "I know that fellow and he's a bum." He's a very handsome and well-tanned young man. All right. What he's trying to get at—I think he's puzzled at the emphasis that all of you are putting on the home. He wants to know, and as an adult educator I want to know too, how are you going to train these people who are not already trained? The people like Mr. Taft talked about, who don't know anything better to do than to wham somebody when they get in their way—what are you going to do about those people?

Mrs. Peters: Well—

Mr. Denny: How are you going to train them to make good homes? It is very well for us to stand up here and tell them that

they ought to have good homes. How are you going to help them make good homes?

Mrs. Peters: Well, I'm going to get those people to listen to the Town Meeting of the Air. (*Applause and laughter.*)

Mr. Denny: *Touché, touché.*

Mrs. Peters: And get their standards from that. I believe the gentleman will have quite a little time to get his standards arranged before he needs them. (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Denny: I can see he's going to get a talking-to by Mrs. Peters a little later on. All right, let's have the question from the gentleman in the balcony.

Man: I address my question to Mr. Gaddis. Don't you think that the great number of divorces today are strengthening the American family—hasty war marriages . . . (*unintelligible*)?

Mr. Denny: What do you mean, that divorces are helpful rather than undesirable?

Man: I meant that divorces are beneficial for the whole society.

Mr. Denny: Divorces are beneficial at times, if I understand you correctly, and you point to war marriages. Is that right?

Man: I beg your pardon?

Mr. Denny: That's what you said. All right, we've got it. Mr. Gaddis, what about it?

Mr. Gaddis: I agree with part of what this gentleman said. I think that divorce in some cases is a desirable thing. But I believe

that when two people get into a temporary spat, or get into some kind of a conflict which can be solved, and they impulsively get a divorce rather than have it studied by a conciliation man, or a family relations man, why then I think it's a very damaging thing, because once they're divorced, they can cause each other a great deal of trouble because they then often hate each other for a period of years.

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Mr. Gaddis. That leads us into another subject which we'll take up on Town Meeting sometime. While our speakers prepare their summaries of tonight's question, here's another message of interest to you.

Announcer: After 12 years on the air, we still receive letters from Town Meeting listeners who try to find evidence of partisanship in the way we word our subjects and the questions from the audience, or the comment of our moderator. As a matter of actual count, our critical mail is still less than one per cent of the total, and we receive an average of 1,500 letters a week.

The interesting thing about this minority criticism is that it is about equally divided between those who call us fascist reactionaries or use the opposite smear terms of communists and fellow travelers.

Now of course we aren't angry here at Town Hall, and we haven't

yet sprouted wings, but on this occasion of our twelfth anniversary, we'd like to refer our friends of a critical mind to this 12-year period. It isn't difficult to pick little bits of a certain program apart and make it appear to be one-sided. But as Al Smith used to say, "Let's look at the record." This doesn't mean that we can't take criticism. We welcome true, constructive criticism.

Now, for the summaries of tonight's discussion, here is Mr. Denny:

Mr. Denny: And now let's hear first from Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti.

Monsignor Ligutti: Real love, not mere physical attraction, must bring man and woman together for the establishment of a home. Good judgment and common sense are needed—not snap decisions. Marriage must be regarded as a permanent union. With permanency there must exist motivation, not a union of respectable convenience.

The family must be a cell of society, fully allied and reproductive. Ownership of the home, space, light, air and privacy should form the environment for a strong family. The things that belong traditionally to a family must remain with it.

Said a dear old lady to me, "The loveliest memories of my childhood days are connected with the smell of baking bread." Home-

making is a full-time job. That, and more—a holy union, a blessed state, a kingdom, a nursery, a school, a co-operative, a sanctuary. This is the true family. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Monsignor Ligutti. And now a final word from Mr. Taft.

Mr. Taft: There is nothing so much needed and so little provided as the real training of youngsters for marriage, and for bringing up children in a home that serves God and community. Pastors are doing it with increasing effectiveness in these days, and theirs is the greatest chance which nothing must be allowed to diminish.

The problem is part of our larger failure to teach the techniques of human relations, of teamwork, and co-operation and fair-sharing of responsibilities for the accomplishment of all our purposes in daily living. That course on human relations is not in the school curriculum, where it should be as important as learning about things.

The homemaking process begins with the teaching of religion, love of God and neighbor—a God who brings new life and strength to those who seek Him in faith; a neighbor or partner, through whom God may speak and serve if we listen and watch for it. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Mr. Taft. Now, Mrs. Peters and Mr.

Gaddis, here's something very special for each of you. Standing here at my right is Mr. Russell McGuire, one of our Town Hall trustees, who has created a foundation through which he does many good works. It was this foundation that financed this contest and set thousands of people to writing and millions of people to thinking about this urgent American problem that we've been discussing tonight. Mr. Russell McGuire.

Mr. McGuire: Thank you, Mr. Denny. On behalf of Town Hall and the Russell McGuire Foundation, I am happy to present to you, Mrs. Annie Laurie Peters, this check for \$500 for your excellent letter; and to you, Mr. Thomas Gaddis, here's also a check for \$500 for your equally constructive suggestions on how to strengthen the American family.

The Russell McGuire Foundation was very happy to play a part with Town Hall and the American Broadcasting Company in creating such a widespread interest in this important American problem. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Mr. McGuire, Mrs. Peters, Mr. Gaddis, Mr. Taft, and Monsignor Ligutti. Now ten sets of the *Encyclopedia Americana* were sent to the honorable mention winners announced last week, and Town Hall Certificates of Merit were given to fifty other persons. Incidentally, the

letters of the ten who won honorable mention will be printed in our Town Meeting Bulletin this week. So if you want copies of the entire program, including these ten, don't forget to enclose ten cents, and send your request to Town Hall, New York 18, New York.

Our warmest thanks go to Mrs. Hortense Odlum, former president of Bonwit-Teller and chairman of the committee of judges, and the distinguished members of her committee for their enthusiastic cooperation in helping to choose the prize-winning letters.

Now next week your Town Meeting begins its tour to the Pacific Coast with a program which you have given top rating in recent Town Meeting balloons. The subject is, "Are Communism and Christianity Incompatible?" Our speakers will be Miss Dorothy Thompson, author and syndicated columnist; Father Edward Cardinal, Educational Director of the Catholic Youth Organization; the Reverend William Howard Melish, Associate Rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Brooklyn; and Doctor Jerome Davis, author and foreign correspondent in Russia.

Our guest moderator for the next two weeks will be my good friend, Clifton Utley, of Chicago. This broadcast will emanate from Station KRNT Radio Theatre under the auspices of the Mid-

Institute for International Relations and Station KRNT. Please remember, your Town Meeting does continue throughout the summer.

Now we have one more set of *Encyclopedia Americana* to present tonight, and our committee of judges tells me that the winner is Mr. Rogers, who asked the question, "How do you explain more divorces in a boom than in a bust period, and more among the rich than the poor?" Congratulations, Mr. Rogers.

As we close our Twelfth Anniversary Broadcast, I want to extend my deep, personal thanks to my associates, Mrs. Marian Carter, and Mrs. Elizabeth Colclough, who week after week plan our programs and secure the speakers. The devoted loyalty and work of these two members of our staff deserve your as well as my lasting thanks. (*Applause.*)

We hope you will plan to be with us next week and every week at the sound of the Crier's bell.

"HOW CAN WE STRENGTHEN THE AMERICAN FAMILY

The following ten essays also were prize winners in the Town Hall Twelfth Anniversary Contest on "How Can We Strengthen the American Family?" The message contained in each essay is valuable and Town Hall is happy to be able to bring them to the attention of the readers of the *Town Meeting Bulletin*.

MR. JOHN PLANK
481 Delaware Ave.
Marion, Ohio

It will take time to strengthen the American family.

There's nothing so very complicated about it. Actually, there's nothing that requires the analysis or pronouncements of learned doctors, educators, or religious leaders.

It just will take time to make it work . . . time in the evening, which a father might want to devote to his newspaper or a magazine, or over a week-end on a golf course.

For the sake of example, let's take me, a very average father. During the war, I was very fortunate not to have been away from my daughter for much more than a year. This time, however, did give me a greater appreciation of the comparative values of my family and my liking for books and other personal pleasures.

In the two years I've been back home, I've read less than half a dozen books. I find it hard to keep up with the magazines to which we subscribe. I've played golf . . . very badly . . . just four times. But I've had a lot of fun with my six-year-old daughter, and the three of us have really became better acquainted.

We have worked out our own little games to play in the evening—she, her mother, and I. We take times for stories every evening. Lots of nights after her prayers, and her mother goes downstairs, I curl up on the bed beside her and we talk of all sorts of things until she gets sleepy. That's really the best time of the whole day because we're really confidential pals then.

The three of us gather together to makings for a picnic, and with our collie, we head out into the country. In winter, we build a snow man or sled riding. We've discovered too it's great fun to go fishing together. Sunday evenings the three of us sit together on the davenport, listening to "The Greatest Story Ever Told" in quiet reverence and discussing it afterwards.

Perhaps one of the worst penalties of civilization is the many outside interests and activities which make demands on parents' time, causing them to drift farther and farther apart.

The things I've mentioned are simple pleasures, but their true importance lies in the fact that we have them together. Doing more things together . . . that's where the strength of a family lies.

Being a parent is a job in itself. Today the trend among parents, just as we find among so many workers, is to do as little as possible to hold a job.

I like to look at it this way. A boy or girl is a child for such a short time . . . think back to your own childhood; how quickly it passed. Before we realize it, children are grown and the cycle begins all over again. I'm willing to postpone some of the things I'd like to do, because there will be time to do them later when I have a daughter to be pals with . . . and cause I want her to want to be pals with her son or daughter when she grows up.

It will take time . . . it does take time to strengthen the American family. Speaking as one small voice, I'd like to offer the opinion that it's well worth the investment.

MISS ADA HERR
64 Clark St.
Brooklyn 2, N.Y.

How strengthen the American family? By giving it something to do. By making it become a responsible, functioning, productive center; by bringing into it the vital activities that make a home truly creative. Concentration of industry and division of labor have served steadily to remove these functions from the home, and the interests of the family have gone scurrying after the dispersed activities.

What is our picture of a strong family? Admittedly, the family was stronger when it was the hub around which most of life revolved—when the home was the center of the chief industries, such as the manufacture of clothing, house furnishings, fuel, food, etc., and when the cultural side of human nature developed in intimate intercourse with these practical necessities of life. For then, religion, education, entertainment and the arts were all pursued in the home. Here children learned from example as well as by precept. As John Dewey said, here there was always something that really needed to be done, and a real necessity that each member of the household should do his own part faithfully and in coöperation with others.

In removing the drudgery from the home, haven't we thrown out the baby with the bath? Home consumption has increased; home production has decreased. But mere consuming does not bind people together, nor bind them to their homes. It is not creatively vital in the way that producing is creatively vital; hence the deadness, the sterility of our present-day home.

We have taken out of it everything that has to do with living. You can't be born there, die there, be buried from there; can't be taught there, be sick there; you can't work there nor learn a skill; and entertainment must be found elsewhere. What is there left but a lifeless dormitory where one changes one's clothes and where food prepared elsewhere is served? We've been mis-educated into thinking of almost all

manual producing as menial, something to be avoided at all cost.

Social agencies and educators are frank in saying that their problem is to do for today's child what the home did for the child in previous generations.

The Harvard Report on Education emphasizes that most children learn no skills at home because nothing is done there that they can observe and assist in. So we look to the school to assume even greater responsibility in imparting to the child all it needs to know in the business of living.

The chief reason given for a new Youth Service was that the modern urban home, since it produces practically nothing, provides no opportunity for youngsters to use their boundless energy by doing home chores such as country children find to do. It is therefore necessary for society to find a way of diverting this store of energy, which is now turning its owners into juvenile delinquents. Therefore, at a cost of thousands of dollars an artificial program was set up to simulate home activities! Not a word about bringing these activities back into the home, among loved ones!

There are several things we can begin to do to make the home do purposefully and with our conscious guidance what it formerly did automatically. In general we can make our home the place where it is fun to produce at least some of the things we consume.

We can satisfy our impulse to do—to create—that which is useful and beautiful, and we will find ourselves doing more and more of the things we have come to pay others to do for us.

You may think it doesn't pay to be your own handy man and dressmaker; to do your own furniture repairs and interior decorating; to mend shoes and make soap; to make Christmas gifts and greeting cards, or a score of other things you can do at home with your family. I don't say it will pay at first, but it is fun. There is no better entertainment.

In the productive home, the watchword is *make* instead of *buy*, and the home becomes a family workshop

where sociability, humor, education, religion and industry meet. That is what it takes to make the family vital and strong.

MR. J. WEBB SAFFOLD
1841 East 89th St.
Cleveland 6, Ohio

We can strengthen the American family by a sincere appreciation of this six-point program, and a conscientious effort to apply it by every member of every family.

The best time to start to strengthen the American family is when it becomes a family, but this program will strengthen any family at any time.

1. *Relationship to God.* The relationship of the individual, or the family, to God is the basic requirement for strength, because basic strength is spiritual strength, and an individual's concept, or lack of concept, of God as his spiritual Father influences every act of that individual, his objectives in life, and his methods of attaining those objectives. It so influences him whether he is conscious of it or not.

The family starts with the father and mother, and the first thing to do to strengthen that family is to establish its relationship to God in its own way. As children are added, they will come up with a firm foundation which recognizes the fact that a right relationship of the individual and the family to God is the starting point of life, and obedience to God's laws gives the only real liberty and security.

2. *Family Teamwork.* The second thing in this program is the realization by each member of the family of the fact that the family is a team and good teamwork makes a good family. Each member tries to see how much he or she can contribute to, AND NOT GET FROM, THE FAMILY-TEAM AND THIS ATTITUDE OF MUTUAL HELPFULNESS will strengthen the family and enable it to meet emergencies courageously and enjoy good times together to the fullest. Family

teamwork is a natural result of sound spiritual foundation.

3. *Education.* The realization on the part of the father and mother, and every member of the family, that education starts before school, goes through all the academic grades, and continues through life because education is unfoldment. Teamwork will enable all members of the family to work together to give each one the best education possible. Education is a means to an end, and not an end in itself, and that end is a fuller, richer life.

4. *Industry.* A genuine appreciation on the part of each member of the family that nothing is really possessed until it is earned, and that there is no substitute for the satisfaction that comes from a good day's work well done, will beget a true estimate of the dignity and usefulness of work as something to be undertaken with zest, instead of being shirked and avoided.

There is no greater fallacy than "something for nothing," and a sound evaluation of work will strengthen the American family.

5. *Health.* Each member of the family must realize that without good health the fruits of education and industry cannot be enjoyed to the fullest. Then each member will do everything possible to promote his or her own good health and help the rest of the family to do the same, for the poor health of any member of the family team affects every other member. A healthy family is a strong family.

6. *Loyalty.* Loyalty is honesty, sympathy, courage and faith in the family relationship. It is the great mediator love, in action, and constitutes the cement that holds the family together and keeps it strong. Loyalty to God on the part of each member of the family team naturally results in loyalty to the family unit and to the Nation. Strong families make strong nations, and strong nations make a strong world.

The vision of unity in one world must first be realized in unity in the family, which is the basic unit of civilization and of mankind.

MRS. RAY SANDEFUR
R. 7, Box 283
Anderson, Indiana

I have spent a whole month wondering, "How Can We Strengthen the American Family," and have found quite a few good answers.

None of us can give a hard and fast rule and make it apply in each case, but here is one that will: Make your home a happy place.

I am a happily married woman because my husband and I share so many things. I believe with all my heart that living is loving. We are all better persons by having loved someone or by being loved by another.

So to the young people planning to be married, I say, "Be positive you love each other enough to want to stay married the rest of your lives!" Far too many people get married thinking, "Well, if this doesn't work out, we can always get a divorce." Stop right here! Never marry if there is even a hint of that thought in mind. On the wedding day, let the lovers say, "This is for keeps!" and make it be just that.

The first few years are the hardest only because of the readjustment each has to make to the other's way of living. The old saying "You never know a person 'til you've lived with him" certainly is true. There are so many disturbances that arise which tend to bring the hinge between man and wife, and it takes forebearance on the part of each to prevent a rift.

Love, to me, means loving my husband more than myself. I put aside my petty grievances to avoid arguments, and sometimes it means self-sacrifice, but it means so much to be kind, and forgiving, and patient, and understanding, whenever your mate needs it. Don't be too proud to say, "I'm sorry," when you're wrong. And you can still love each other as much even though you know his weaknesses, and he yours. Each day you learn a little more about the one you married. We share alike our devotion.

If we are to have intelligent citizens, this country ought to have a nation-

wide law that restricts marriage permits to the mentally fit. Only the mentally as well as the physically capable should marry.

Naturally, we suppose each married couple wants children, and as I see it, the real task of strengthening the American family begins with the child. Too many parents are too busy with outside interests to take time with their children. The key word is: EDUCATION! Education in the home usually means applied human psychology.

The better educated parents are more qualified to teach their children good citizenship, early. Of course, the child learns much by observing and mimicking his parents, so it is most important that they themselves are above reproach in behavior and character.

Raising a family is both mother's and father's responsibility. They ought never to criticize each other before the children, and they should uphold the other's commands to the child and see that they are carried out. It is unfortunate when one parent is more lenient than the other so that the child runs to him to escape the responsibility or punishment that the other parent placed upon him.

The child must always feel secure of his parents' love, and also of the bond of family love.

We try to teach the Golden Rule to our three children, inspiring them to learn self-control, respect for each other, and self-sacrifice (each learns to divide his belongings with the others). An only child misses this.

School comes easier if the child first learns these things at home. A complete school education is essential because it provides a child with an adult mind able to cope with responsibilities in later life. A well educated person makes a better marriage prospect, thus the better parent he will make. For it is we, the parents, who have the power to shape the lives of the children who will become tomorrow's citizens.

And so, may I repeat what I said in the beginning, "Make your home a happy place, for a happy family is a strong one!"

MRS. WILLIAM G. GORROD, JR.
38 Bradford St.
Springfield, Mass.

How many average American families today could truthfully answer the question, "Is family devotion a part of your everyday life?" To answer that question fully would take extensive research and study; yet it is the very core of the family. Religion, regardless of creed, is a necessary and unfailing help in time of trouble, in sorrow, joy, and everyday problems. This vital need must be present to strengthen the family, therefore, it must not be placed in the background and brought forth only at will. From personal observation, many well-meaning parents send the young children to Sunday School while the mother remains at home to prepare Sunday dinner and the father righteously drives the little tots to church, comes back home, and reads the papers; then fetches them at the noon hour. Too many do this. If all went to church as a family, the feeling of unity would strengthen ties greatly. The parents set an example and will benefit fully as much as will the children.

There seems, today, to be the idea in many minds that families of three or four in number are the only happy ones. Too often, families of five or six are pitied and wondered at. It is often-times a struggle to raise three or four children, yet it does not seem right to limit the American families to two children. Security for these often "pitied" families could be brought about by putting them in the limelight for a while by means of books, magazines, movies, and the radio. Large families can be happy ones.

If a child, no matter what age, asks questions of his parents, it is the obligation of the parents to answer the questions in a straightforward manner as clearly and plainly as possible. Then, and then only, can a child grow to respect his parents in every way. If the questioning child in the family is informed correctly of matters of concern to him, he need not seek wrong information from questionable sources. A child thus informed will in turn

grow up to be a more intelligent part for the future citizens of this country.

If, in a family, there is a designated evening which could be devoted to financial affairs, it would strengthen the family in the relationship of persons. The parents, and the children as well, should all be included in the necessary part of family living. Business affairs should be discussed openly and frankly with all and should be worked out together. There is no such thing as one member of the family "having a head for figures." All being huddled together make for better harmony, wider suggestions, and the better management. If children were made to feel important and necessary at the financial conferences, they in turn would better understand the value of money and the meaning of exchanging luxuries for necessities. In this plan, children would be shown why they cannot have everything they might want, and they would grow in wisdom for future home management and security.

Home life must be made more enjoyable to adults and children and to further establish a stronger family. If fun and companionship are focused in the home, interests, therefore, where they are right. Group games, where all may participate, are commendable. Enjoying movies, ball games, and trips together should be encouraged instead of solitary adventures. The most talked-of Juvenile Delinquency might well be retarded if all parents made a larger effort to make home a happy, livable, comfortable, safe place for children, instead of a safe place for adult friends only.

When there are children of school age, it is a mother's obligation to be at home where a full measure of love and guidance can be bestowed at all times. If the mother works outside the home, the children are deprived of the needed attention because of the program of a mother, as evenings are consequently devoted to housekeeping duties instead of to enjoyable family entertainment.

Children should never be included in any distressing emotional conflicts which may arise between a husband and

The children's sense of security is lessened if they are exposed to such conditions. Many disturbing, harmful consequences, such as nervousness in school and the failure of not getting along with other children, may arise. Children's hearts and minds are sensitive and should be protected by the parents, and parents should confine their arguing and disagreeing entirely to themselves. The unity of family life can easily be broken by unthinking parents.

The American family is an institution, and it is up to everyone to share the responsibilities of strengthening it to keep it so.

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I'm just an American mother—I can't express the views of a learned statistician or an experienced welfare worker—but, as the mother of two teen-age boys, I see and feel the influences that are weakening the American family life, very keenly and very personally, and only by recognizing these weakening influences can we find the means of strengthening our family life.

Amazing as it seems, the more we progress as a civilized country, the more we weaken our family ties! In years gone by, families found good, wholesome entertainment in the home, church, and school; today the movies, magazines, radio and recordings vie with each other to catch the attention of the American family—and much of what they offer is anything but wholesome. "Forbid the children to go to such movies, read such magazines, listen to such radio programs or recordings"—yes, that sounds like a solution—excepting to us parents who find that to *forbid constantly* is to hurture a child's resentment, lose his confidence, and drive any normal, curious child into finding out for himself what these forbidden things are all about! When we clean up the crime themes and luridness in the fields of "entertainment" we will have taken

a seven-league-boots stride toward strengthening the American family life.

Still in the category of "outside influences," let us look at our underprivileged families. Among our "juvenile delinquents" we find many potentially fine youngsters who, because of home influences, never had a chance. But we could give them that chance! A good Boy Scout won't turn criminal; youngsters who are busy at Youth Clubs have no time for "mobs"; these youngsters are the ingredients of TOMORROW'S FAMILIES—and we must enlarge our youth NOW—increase our club facilities NOW so every child has a chance to be a good American.

Then, the "average" American family—families that are the backbone of our great country! In addition to adverse "outside influences," the home influence in these families has weakened very much. Religious training should, perhaps, be considered first. We can find a hundred alibis for the trend to neglect church attendance, but there is no alibi for the *effect* of this negligence. The bond between God and the family is one that is attained only by living with His influence felt constantly—family prayer, meal-time blessing, and taking our children to church, not just sending them.

Next must come our responsibility as parents. So many dads have settled down into a "I owe my children food, clothing, shelter and education" rut. Material things do not answer a child's entire need by any means; but today's busy dads seem to have lost the ability to be comrades to their children and another family tie is weakened. And mothers, how very much we need to get back the "Mother's place is in the home" attitude! I'm not referring just to the working mothers, either! Let mothers spend less time playing bridge and more time playing with their children; less time fixing party snacks and more time fixing cookies for the "gang"; less time for beauty care and more time for child care.

And the home—is the house every child lives in a *home* to him—or is it, more often, a place that must be kept spotless for entertaining? And is his

yard his playground? Or is it a "Don't trespass on the lovely grass" place? We need more homes cluttered with toys—more yards trampled by playing feet. We can entertain in our homes and grow grass in our yards for all the years to come, but a child only has one childhood in which to grow.

Finally, divorce! Like a contagious disease divorce has swept our family life, separating husbands and wives, but what is more important—separating dads and moms, taking from the children their greatest security. Is so much divorce necessary? If parents were devoting their combined efforts to the good of their children, wouldn't these family ties bind closer the matrimonial ties?

We can strengthen the American family life, but only through the united efforts of our "entertainment world," our churches, our civic organizations, and us parents. We must talk it over the radios, preach it from the pulpits, print it in the papers, for tomorrow's American family life will be only as strong as today's children are encouraged and taught to make it.

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Being the father of five children, ranging in age from twelve to twenty-six, I have found that the best way to strengthen my home is as follows:

While the children were small, we had them attend Sunday School. My wife and I also attended. As the children grew up, they became interested in the various church activities, such as young people's society, choir, etc. In this way, they spent a good deal of their time with a fine group of people with good habits. They still had plenty of time for other forms of recreation, such as movies, dancing, parties, and outdoor sports.

My wife and I found it a good policy to have the confidence of all of our children. We feel that each one is an important part of the family unit. We have no favorites. The children are free

to come and go as they please, as long as we know of their whereabouts and whom they associate with. In this way the child feels responsible for his actions, and will think twice before doing anything that will offend the rest of the family. They never hesitate to talk over with the family what they have been or what they did, but seem to enjoy telling us everything. Of course, after they reach eighteen or twenty years of age, we don't expect them to go into details, as we parents didn't do that either when we were at that age.

The children should have the best education possible, even if it is necessary for the parents to sacrifice to give it to them. If the children can help, much the better, as they will appreciate it more. They should start while in high school, but they should have the privilege of using the money they earn as they see fit, and should not have to help with family expenses unless they wish to. This will soon show how much the child appreciates the value of money and what the parents have done for them before they were able to earn themselves. Even after their education is completed and they start to work, the parents should not demand the entire earnings as some parents do, but should get a fair amount to help pay the family expenses. The child should have enough to make ends meet and save a little too.

The home should always be open to all friends of the family, and the children should be encouraged to bring their friends home now and then. A party once in a while is also a good way for the children to meet their friends. The parents should also mix in the fun, but should not make a nuisance of themselves.

Indecencies, cursing, and sex talk should not come up for discussion in the family circle. The children should be told about sex relations, but at the proper time and by the proper person. Filthy jokes and cursing should not be tolerated in the home.

As to drinking, I think it is better to have it in the home if it is necessary to have it, but the parents should set an example of moderation. If parents

most of the time in a tavern or night club, they won't have much time for their children, and the children may follow their example and do likewise.

There should be no secrets between the members of the family. Events of the day and anything of interest should be discussed by the entire family.

Encourage music, singing, etc., in the home. The home should be a place where the family can enjoy themselves, and not a show place where one cannot feel at ease.

All members of the family should take an interest in local and national politics, and this encourages educational discussion. Be tolerant and helpful, and try to see the other person's point of view. Be a booster and not a wet blanket.

If the parents of this generation would give more thought and time to the proper rearing and education of their children, and be more thankful for their blessings, we wouldn't have to worry about the generations to come and the future American homes. We have been too busy having a good time ourselves, and the children have had more or less to shift for themselves. We have become too modern and have forgotten some of the teachings of our parents.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. *Matthew 7:18.*

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The breakdown of the American family is no accident. It follows the inexorable law of life: adjust or perish. The mighty dinosaur didn't have sense enough to shed his bony plates of armor, so gradually he passed out. Just so will any type of family which fails to adjust to its environment.

The American family has evolved, changing to suit the changing American environment, material and social, but social laws and customs, which embody mental attitudes, always change

more slowly than material environment. This differential didn't matter so much when the world moved slowly, but change itself has changed. It is speeding up.

Never in all history has there been so much change as since the turn of the century. Never has any nation geared the material side of its car of progress so swiftly to meet this change as has America. But the social side is still traveling in low. Something has to break.

Like poor old Diney, the American family is still dragging bony armor. Ossified ideas, once protective, only weaken it today. Why moan about the good old days? You can't go home again. If you accept what sociologists know about them you won't want to. Why not discard the dear old dogmas which hamper free development. We can give the family a fighting chance to function. We can strengthen the American family by sloughing old ideas which encumber it, today.

Our family pattern has grown along with our democracy, which, based on Christian ethic, establishes the equal worth of every person. We have come belatedly to allow woman, co-founder of the family, to develop her personality in colleges of higher education. Twenty-seven years ago the American Constitution recognized that women were citizens, and allowed them to vote.

So, young Americans today want partnership in marriage. They know our advanced society can supply all their needs efficiently outside the family, except the vital one—companionship. Mating, with its fruition in children, is a means to an end. Young people found families to fulfil that strong need of loving and of being loved, of being understood and valued as persons, of sharing intimately life's experiences. Companionship of father-mother-child—life's trinity—for this "God setteth the solitary in families."

But outmoded interpretations of the Christian ethic persist which deny democracy and bring their loftiest desires too often to frustration.

What are these outmoded ideas? Briefly stated for brevity, here are some:

The family should be organized for the comfort of the man, its head.

Only the man must earn. He owns the income and wife and can manage both.

The man's duty as husband and as father is to provide. Anything more is a favor.

All good women like all kinds of housework, also child care.

The woman who gives birth is thereby endowed with teaching ability.

The mother is solely responsible for the characters of the children.

A good mother sacrifices herself, and indulges her husband and children.

The more children the better.

Children should sacrifice their life-plans for their parents.

The double standard in sex relations is acceptable.

Rules for fair working conditions and pay do not apply to mothers in homes.

A mother should not have the freedom a father has to function as a citizen, or to choose work that will use personal training and abilities.

Parents should dominate the beliefs and careers of their children.

A family should be kept together by religious, legal, or propaganda pressure, if love fails.

Any fair-minded analyst of current conversation, radios, movies, press, pulpit, and platform will find relics of such ideas implicit, still prevalent, moulding our laws and customs.

These same six agencies can free us, if they will.

The family's external conditions also need adjusting. Cities need suburban house-groupings around play parks, with co-operative nursery schools and other services, or state-subsidized expert services within the home. Incomes need a lower ceiling and a higher floor—wealth weakens even more than poverty. Everyone needs useful work. The family, not the profiteer, needs the benefit of American invention and mass production. High school boys

and girls need co-education in budgeting, nutrition, democratic family relationships. Couples need pre-marriage courses, physical and mental tests, before any marriage license is granted.

But all these needs are secondary. The basic need, the first need now, is to get our thinking free. If we shed the outworn thought-shell which cramps all true development, American good common sense will find the way and means to strengthen the American family.

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What can be done to strengthen American home?

We live in a world that can be molded for the better way of life only by the single-minded perseverance of millions of diligent, intelligent individuals.

The family is a basic institution of society because it furnishes the permanent home of the man and woman united in marriage, and is the nurseries and training school of the young.

Most of us are inspired in some manner at some time or other to do something to improve our lot and ourselves. Before anything can be remedied, there has to be a need and a want for it.

There is an existing need for improvement in many homes. The problem at hand is the way in which the families can be inspired to improve their standard of home life and family relations.

The responsibility for strengthening the American home rests squarely on the shoulders of Mr. and America.

Parents should take inventory of their husband-and-wife relations. If there is mutual understanding and love in their marriage, family relationships will be founded on those qualities.

Many parents regard raising a family as a dreaded chore, without any rewards. But they, as well as society, are well paid for any effort they exert.

ward their children. And it has to be a loving effort to show a profit.

There should be true love and loyalty within the family, sympathetic understanding of each member's problems. Parents should be pals to their children, talk everything over with them, and gain the child's confidence, and he will in turn confide in them.

It has been said that it doesn't take brains to become a parent, but it takes a lot of energy physically, spiritually, morally, and socially by parents to give strength to a family group.

If parents can weigh their judgment against the following, their home will be the better for it:

1. There should be no criticism of the parent by the other. Keep your own counsel and boost each other to all others.

2. Be kind and understanding of each other's "in-laws."

3. Make a definite plan for the upbringing of the children and stick to it.

4. Never quarrel before the children.

5. Don't be extravagant. Balance the budget and spend accordingly.

6. Fathers should take more interest in their children. Too many of them leave it all up to the mother.

7. Take care in reprimanding children prematurely. This action breeds contempt in a child. Be sure his side given audience.

8. Meet a challenge with an optimistic view. Don't yammer that the world owes you a better living.

9. Practice the appeal to "do unto others." And honor the Ten Commandments.

10. Feed emotions as well as the mind. Read good books, see stimulating movies, enjoy good music and drama with your children.

11. Do not neglect the good impulses that help that stray animal or human being in trouble. Fight against irritability over trifles which grows thin us.

12. Enlarge sympathies for religious tolerance of others.

13. Try to appraise accurately the person who repels.

14. Pray with your family. A family that prays together, stays together.

Accumulation of physical goods is not the fundamental need of humanity. A higher living standard does not make better men. Men aren't happier when they are richer.

When a family finds contentment there is happiness. Happier families make a better America.

Self-respect and respect for others, along with sympathy, modesty, helpfulness to others, activity, interests in the important developments of our times, dignity, gratitude, and loyalty will strengthen our homes and fit our children for a better life as better citizens in a better world.

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We can strengthen the American family. However, if by strengthening, one means a return to the relatively large non-mobile and patriarchal type, with Mother always home at housekeeping—the kind with which many of us are familiar—the answer is "no." The past thirty years have seen unprecedented changes in the American family, its structure and functions. We are still in the process of flux. Even sociologists hesitate to predict how the typical twentieth century family will be characterized. To many of us, all participants in this important social drama, the developments are rather frightening. Newspapers, magazines, and books bring us the terrible tale of divorces, in many areas running two to every three marriages, of increasing sex irregularities, of mounting juvenile delinquencies, and other signs of family breakdown. We feel that it is not enough to stand by and watch "developments," but that if the family, which has been a basic source of strength in all successful societies, is to continue to play its major part in American life, important steps must be taken to preserve it and its valuable functions.

The breakdown in the family can be attributed basically to the culminating developments of the Industrial Revolution and to the factors stemming from it, such as urbanization, apartment-house living, the working woman, growing expense in raising children, mobility of population, commercialized recreation, changing morals and customs, and the weakening of religious guidance. Many of these factors, of course, can never be changed, but we can alleviate the problems they have brought.

We cannot, for example, stop the dispersion of our population, but we can help each family member have his or her home mean much more to him or her than it does now.

We cannot make Father give up his job in industry, but we can improve his economic circumstances and give him more leisure time so as to be a real force and example for his children.

We cannot put an end to divorce, but we can make it harder to get married and provide marriage counsellors to help solve personality conflicts instead of having so many divorce "mills."

We cannot stop working mothers, but we can provide youth centers, community activities, health clinics, and school courses to help her and her children keep the family going, straight and happy, mentally and physically.

We cannot put a complete stop to juvenile delinquencies, but we can put our fingers on delinquent parents, helping some and leading others to really play the parts of understanding and loving parents.

We cannot do away with city tenements, but we can provide opportunities for family work, recreation, and co-operation, with hobby shops, group gardening projects, picnic areas, and the like.

We cannot do away with the movies and the press, but we can demand clean, wholesome, all-family entertainment, from good books that we can

place on any table to radio programs satisfactory to all tastes.

We cannot force everyone to join church, but religious leaders can reach out to play a more vital role in every-day moral and spiritual lives of the public.

We cannot do away with the modern strains and stresses on family ties, we can plan together, share responsibilities, respect one another, and find the family a real source of security and satisfaction for all members.

These above-mentioned remedies all but partial preventatives and cures. Two basic needs must first be fulfilled in the minds and bodies of American people, indeed in all God's children, before we shall be able to stamp out the difficulties confronting many of us. The modern American family can only be a vital force if we do away with these two basic elements which beset family life. Is it any wonder family patterns are so disorganized? As we look around us we see the other fundamental institutions to which we anchor ourselves being challenged, whether it be government, our economic order, religion, or our school systems. Are these all in such a severe period of strain? Because the world today is full of starving, unhappy, fearful, frustrated people. And America, all of her glories and high standards, has her share of these people, and in the past thirty years, because of developments in science and technology, have been linked with the trouble of the other teeming millions in this world."

World society has a vast rejuvenating task challenging it. It is a dual work of reconstruction, both material and spiritual. First, we must provide for the economic well-being of the world's peoples. Secondly, we must tie ourselves to and follow the moral and ethical codes of Christ. These two sets of values achieved throughout the world would eventually see an end to strife between nations, as well as strife within families.